

US-131 Improvement Study
St. Joseph County, Michigan and Elkhart County, Indiana
From the Indiana Toll Road (I-80/90) to a point one mile north of Cowling Road

**Draft Environmental Impact Statement
and
Section 4(f) Evaluation**

Submitted Pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(c) and 49 U.S.C. 303

By the

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

and

Michigan Department of Transportation

Date of Approval

FHWA Administrator

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This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) documents the social, economic, and environmental consequences and mitigation measures for improving 17 miles of US-131 from the Indiana Toll Road in Elkhart County, Indiana, to 1 mile north of Cowling Road, in St. Joseph County, Michigan. No-Build, Transportation System Management, Intermodal/Transit, and Build Alternatives are evaluated in this document. This DEIS identifies Practical Alternatives for the study area that include a limited access freeway, both on and off of the existing US-131 alignment, as well as alternatives for non-freeway improvements on the existing US-131 alignment in conjunction with a two-lane by-pass around the Village of Constantine. The six Build Alternatives that were evaluated in detail will improve US-131 traffic operations and levels-of-service, and address operational inefficiencies within the study area. A Preferred Alternative has not been identified in this document. Important issues and major socio-economic and environmental concerns include natural environment impacts, land use impacts, and noise impacts. This DEIS fulfills the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidelines, and requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality, and the Federal Highway Administration.

Comments on this DEIS are due within 45 days of publication of the Notice of Availability in the Federal Register. Comments should be submitted to Mr. Bob Parsons, Public Hearings Officer, Michigan Department of Transportation, P.O. Box 30050, Lansing, Michigan 48909.